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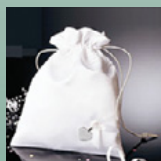
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# Ethics once again

by Will Nicholls

I have written about ethics throughout the years and it's time to do so once again. It certainly isn't new: this issue was a hot one way back in 1990 at that year's Annual General Assembly. That's when a resolution to establish a code of ethics to govern potential conflicts of interest for elected officials passed unanimously. The mandate for the Grand Chief, as for representatives from each band council and legal staff, was to draft ethics guidelines within six months for adoption as a by-law at all band councils. The guidelines were to be applied to all Cree entities as well.

Twenty-two years after this 12-page by-law was drafted, however, not a single Cree band council in Eeyou Istchee has implemented this important set of ethical standards. These guidelines included strict rules to prevent conflicts of interest. Officials would have been required to avoid taking part in decisions from which they or their business associates could benefit, for instance, in winning a contract or obtaining any form of payment. These rules likewise prohibited trading favours in exchange for contracts, misappropriation and embezzlement of funds. Entities would have been barred from giving loans to officers or employees except for travel allowances or salary advances. Officials would have had to avoid any activity that didn't leave them enough time to do their jobs.

The draft also included anti-discrimination guidelines concerning sex, marital status, age, social status, religion or political orientation. It was produced in a way that reflected the Cree way of life and society and integrated our cultural values and traditions.

With the relatively small population of our Nation (less than 20,000 members), it is not unusual for a person to wear more than one hat, with responsibilities and interests in both the political and business spheres. Therein lies the problem: conflicting positions are a part of life. In one specific case I know of, a band council chief was approached by a

band member over a disagreement the member had with an entity in the community, only to be informed that the chief also had a seat on the board of this business. How could this member ever hope for an impartial resolution of his issue from his political representative?

At *the Nation* we often hear stories of politicians or appointed officials who have a say over contracts that their own companies are bidding on, or who decide on courses of action that they would personally benefit from in the long run. It's not surprising that this can happen. Elected or appointed positions allow one to network with people in government and business. The people in these positions have much greater access to and information about economic opportunities (partnerships, contracts, grants, loans and so on) than the average band member. These positions also frequently provide higher salaries than what is earned by the average person trying to make ends meet. So they have the money, knowledge and connections to exploit opportunities that are out of reach for the people they are supposed to serve, represent and support.

Don't get me wrong: we need the entrepreneurial spirit of people who recognize business opportunities. The Cree Nation needs to build a strong economic base for now and the future. The only problem is that without ethics guidelines adopted as by-laws there are no rules beyond personal convictions. The old saying that power corrupts – and absolute power corrupts absolutely – is especially relevant here. With no rule of law or common rules for our political and business elites, it's too easy to take advantage of one's position of responsibility. In the end, we have to ask how well our Nation can really develop without clear ethical guidelines that are the same for everyone... and whether we really want to be part of the situation that results when these rules are not implemented.

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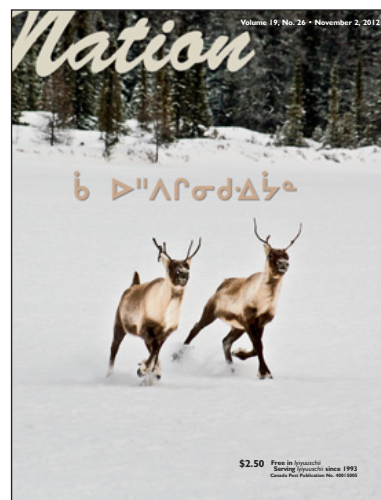
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Louise Abbott/COTA  
This image appears in  
*Eeyou Istchee: Land of the Cree*  
[www.creetourism.ca](http://www.creetourism.ca)

# Being human these days...

by Sonny Orr



For a long time, some of my heroes were star athletes who, of course, were in incredible shape and were often world-record holders. Since those days, many of their records were broken and some stars slowly turned off, their twinkle never to be seen again. Some athletes, however, went on to become more famous for their roles in politics than for their prowess in physiques.

Some became movie stars, who, I think, were not only stars for their good looks but for their ability to do their own stunts, cutting down on production costs and lawsuits. Eventually, some passed away and some just kept on growing in the public eye. Take for example, Arnold Schwarzenegger, the very epitome of a real-live action hero.

Arnold went on to become Governor of California. The voters were ecstatic, after all, who could better represent California than one of the best-known people in the world? The opposition to his governance style, however, fought harder than any Terminator to eliminate him. Arnold came back swinging. It seemed that the ultimate killer cyborg had a human side after all.

Arnold didn't fare well with his financial way of doing business, but he did clean up the air big time, bringing out the greener side of big business and the state of California. Being a Schwarzenegger fan, I admired the way he approached things and he was an honest man (at least he coughed up confessions when needed).

When things started to get rough for Arnold, he came clean with who he was as a human being. He said on national television that he did a lot of things that

might not be considered as ordinary; he did a lot of different drugs and consumed much drink in his time as a superstar. This made him just like many people in the real world who have to face similar issues and, as a result, it made him even more popular.

Now, how about our own people? Where did the First Nations stars go? Most famously Tom Longboat, Will Rogers (who almost became president of the USA) and Jim Thorpe, all stars who still shine in modern-day legends. Today, First Nations people are all over the sports world and they are all still human.

Romeo Saganash ran for Canada in the Pan American Games back in the day and now he's a politician, perhaps one of the more famous ones from Quebec. However, in one of his human moments he collapsed obviously exhausted, tired and probably inebriated enough to sleep on a plane, only to be tossed off the flight on his way home from a stressful time on Parliament Hill.

What's the difference between Romeo and Arnold? Not much I say. I know that the political world is stressful, incredibly demanding and requires a lot of commitment. What I know is that no matter how good your physique is, life will eventually take its toll. So, I say, terminator or not, once you lose sight of your own humanity, then you work for things that are not humanly right. Perhaps we all have to look at the person sometimes, when their star shines bright enough to blind some folks and mask them in a suit that might belong to someone you expect to be superhuman with powers of authority.

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# Fighting words

## Crees respond to CNSC's decision on Strateco

by Jesse Staniforth

news

In what some in Eeyou Istchee said was not a surprising decision, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Council (CNSC) announced on October 17 that it would be granting a license for advanced uranium exploration in the Mistissini area to Strateco Resources Inc.

This came despite the profound opposition to the project voiced by Mistissini Chief Richard Shecapio and the Mistissini Band Council, the Grand Council of the Crees (GCC), and many members of the community who spoke during the three days of public hearings on the issue in June. Following those hearings, the GCC in August called for a permanent moratorium on all uranium-related activity in Eeyou Istchee.

Responding by email, Aurèle Gervais of the CNSC stated that the decision was made because the CNSC judged the venture to offer no risk to the environment or to public health and safety. "Social acceptability for a project is outside the commission's mandate," he said.

Chief Richard Shecapio was blunt in his response. "Obviously we totally disapprove of that decision. We understand that this advanced exploration program that [Strateco] is proposing may present a low risk at this point, but we're not only looking at this exploration phase. We're looking at the big picture. This is part of a project that will lead to exploitation eventually. There's no exploitation yet, but this could lead to future mining of uranium, which we don't want to see."

The response from the GCC was immediate: the same day as the CNSC announcement, it sent out a press release stating, "The James Bay Cree Nation has affirmed its commitment to the complete cessa-

tion of all uranium exploration, mining and waste emplacement in Eeyou Istchee."

Already, the GCC seemed preparing itself for a fight. "We remain determined to protect our economies and way of life against the unique and grave threat posed by uranium mining and uranium waste," stated Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come. "The Cree Nation will proceed with all necessary steps to ensure that our permanent uranium moratorium in Eeyou Istchee is recognized and implemented."

Chief Shecapio affirmed this. "The Crees in the past have been able to succeed in defending Cree rights and protecting the environment," he said.

Deputy Grand Chief Ashley Iserhoff agreed. "In the past, with regard to certain development projects, if the Crees were not agreeable to certain projects, they did not happen. We always strategize. We'll use all avenues once the time comes."

Iserhoff underlined that the Cree Nation is not opposed to mineral exploitation in general, but maintains a firm stand on those substances it considers potentially harmful.

"There's certain mineral development the Crees are interested in," he said. "Uranium is one of the ones we've always maintained a position on. The Cree Nation is not interested at all in any uranium, whether it's exploration or anything after exploration."

Iserhoff went on to say that he supports the opposition to the project completely. "I'm from Mistissini and I don't want it to go any further than it is now."

Two days after the CNSC decision, the GCC responded to statements made to the media by

Strateco President Guy Hébert, who claimed that the COMEX environmental review report on the project was "unanimously favourable" and supported by "Cree representatives on the committee".

In a second press release, the GCC forwarded the full text of the COMEX report, which had previously not been public, highlighting that the Review Committee had "serious reservations" about the project. As well, the COMEX report states that Strateco "must obtain the Crees' consent, through the Mistissini Band Council, with regard to the project's social acceptability, and must enter into a written agreement to that effect with the Band Councillor or another body designated by the Band Council."

"We are surprised at Strateco's decision to misinform the public by misstating the content of the report, in an apparent attempt to pressure the Quebec administrator to make a decision in its favour," stated Coon Come.

"The idea of [Guy Hébert] saying the Crees are in support, and even saying that the Cree Nation likes the idea of a uranium project, that shouldn't have happened," said Iserhoff. "There were outright lies, telling the world that the Crees were in support of the project. As a developer coming into the territory, they should try to find ways to always include us in any discussions. If the Crees already said no, then why pursue the idea?"

Quebec's new Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment, Wildlife and Parks, Daniel Hébert, has announced his intention to call for public hearings with the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement on the project.

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# Means was mean but meant well

## Remembering AIM leader Russell Means

by ndiamon

news

A powerful, eloquent voice for Indigenous peoples worldwide was silenced on October 22. Russell Means – activist, actor, musician, writer, boxer and political firebrand – succumbed to cancer at his home in Porcupine on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota. He was 72 years old.

Means gained notoriety in the early 1970s when he led the American Indian Movement's occupation of Wounded Knee in South Dakota to protest the US government's neglect of its numerous treaties with Native groups across the nation. Earlier, he had organized protests at Mount Rushmore in the Black Hills and at Plymouth, Massachusetts, where AIM seized the Mayflower II, a replica of the ship that first brought English and Dutch colonists to North America. He also participated in the occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs building in Washington in 1972. It was for these acts that he was called "the biggest, baddest, meanest, angriest, most famous American Indian activist of the late 20th century". He was

the Best Actor Oscar on behalf of Marlon Brando for *The Godfather* while being surrounded and shot by US federal troops at Wounded Knee. His story was so good and I got so excited that I hung up on him almost mid-sentence.

I finally met him in person at his ranch on the Pine Ridge Reservation months later while we were filming. When we arrived he was in the middle of a meeting outside his ranch. We waited until it finished and then he invited us into his home. He was an imposing figure, well over six feet and still healthy nearing 70. His home was being renovated. It was modest with a tiny kitchen and a well-used office. Several fine horses grazed in a field outside his yard.

He suggested a space behind his desk for his interview. I refused and moved his desk. I had brought a gift of tobacco for him, which he accepted with a quiet nod. "Cree, eh?" he asked, genuinely interested. He reminded me of Cree Elders I had interviewed. When I asked my first question, he proceeded to answer



Russell Means – activist, actor, musician, writer, boxer and political firebrand

**"MEANS NEVER MINCED WORDS. AND FEW EVER MINCED THEIR WORDS ABOUT HIM."**

also called the most famous Indian since Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse.

Means turned to acting in his 50s, appearing in *The Last of the Mohicans*, in Oliver Stone's *Natural Born Killers* and in Disney's animated film *Pocahontas* as Powhatan. He also appeared as a gardener/healer in *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. He released an album of angry poetry played to an electronic beat in the 1990s. He published his autobiography *Where White Men Fear to Tread* in 1995.

I first met Russell Means on the telephone in 2008 while researching my documentary film, *Reel Injun*. I remember him telling me the story of him watching Sacheen Littlefeather refusing

almost all the other ones I had prepared. He was a born storyteller. The "interview" lasted almost three hours. I remember him telling me at one point: "Marlon Brando was the greatest white man who ever lived!" There was no argument from me.

The next day we met at Wounded Knee and he shared his experiences of those 71 days and nights. "They meant business. They had .50 calibres," he said of the government forces. We walked by the graves of the victims of Wounded Knee from 1890 and 1972. I felt a real sadness in him as he pointed out the gravestones of people he had known and those his people remembered. He was

very generous with his time and completely unlike the Means who was detested by so many.

I met him again in Los Angeles at a screening of *Reel Injun*. I was taking questions from a very polite crowd and the session was just winding down when all of a sudden his voice rang out. "Can I say something?!" He then proceeded to tear up the film for 25 minutes with me standing next to him. He finished with, "*Reel Injun* is a pretty good film. White people will love it."

I met him again for the final time in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I hadn't noticed him in the dark theatre. His voice rang out again, interrupting the proceedings. He spoke his mind, but this time he seemed to have warmed to our film.

There were two kinds of Indians in this world – those who hated Russell Means and those who loved him. Means never minced words. And few ever minced their words about him.

Russell Means is survived by 10 children and his fifth wife Pearl.

## NDP MP Romeo Saganash takes medical leave

On October 22, Romeo Saganash, NDP MP and an early contender in the leadership race of the party, took medical leave to recover from his dependence on alcohol.

The Quebec MP for Abitibi-Baie-James-Nunavik-Eeyou made the request after an incident on October 19, when he was ejected from an Air Canada Jazz flight due to his intoxication.

Saganash thanked NDP leader Thomas Mulcair for allowing him the time to make it through this ordeal as well as his colleagues who are helping him through "this difficult period".

"I know that profound scars were left on me because of my time in residential school," said Saganash. "I never shied away from that. The death of my friend and mentor, Jack Layton, also greatly affected me. Like him, I needed a crutch. The leadership race wore me out, on top of taking me away from my children and my loved ones even more often."

Online there has been an outpouring of support wishing the MP well and recognizing the difficulty of the problem of alcoholism, with an estimate that over 200,000 people suffer from the addiction in Canada.

## Groundbreaking tech earns CCI a silver at international awards

The standard view on museums is that it's a one-way street in education — people go to them to learn. But Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute (CCI) has decided on going a different way in helping, through the use of apps and mobile technology, visitors contribute their stories.

On October 10, CCI was awarded the silver prize in the Web'art category for the Mishkutuunimatuutau (Let's Exchange)

project from the International Council of Museums Audiovisual conference.

CCI was selected from a group of 16 international finalists from Europe, Latin America and Asia. The Mishkutuunimatuutau project is a part of the CCI's interactive website where all of the artifacts are available for viewing as well as a virtual tour of the museum.

"The labels beside each artifact is in three languages which doesn't leave room for much other information, Museum director Stephen Ingliss said. "But with [mobile phones] or an iPad, the visitor can scan the QR code on each label and have access to more information and videos."

The goal of the project is to build a database of cultural stories contributed by Cree visitors. CCI received funding for the project from the Canadian Interactive Fund.

For more info:  
creeculturalinstitute.ca

## BullyingCanada needs your support

Bullying has taken over the headlines lately after the recent suicide of Amanda Todd in British Columbia. But there are many more cases that go unreported, with the rate of suicide among Native youths six times the rate of non-Aboriginal youth.

Sadly, with the advent of social media and cellphones, bullying is no longer confined to the schoolyard but torments the child even in a formerly a safe haven: the family home.

Since 2006, BullyingCanada has been working to provide support for youth going through this terrible experience. Their main goal is to ensure that the problem is addressed as fast as possible by being the middle person between the families and school administration.

The organization has been volunteer driven since its founding. Their 24/7 toll-free hotline provides direct support,

receiving 10,000 calls monthly along with 5,000 appeals made on their website.

Being a non-profit charity that doesn't receive funding from the federal government or United Way, BullyingCanada relies solely on public and corporate donations. The charity is facing the drastic measure of cutting some of their capacity to serve youth in November if they don't secure enough funding.

For more info:  
www.BullyingCanada.ca/org

## Innu Band Council comments on Route 138 protests

Just hours after the Innu blockade of Route 138 was broken by police intervention, the Innu Band Council Uashat mak Mani-Utenam (ITUM) issued a statement regarding its community's actions.

"The [ITUM] is not surprised by the latest overflow of anger from the community.... All the great Innu Nations in Quebec and the Labrador can testify to the violation of their rights by the government and the destruction of their traditional territory by Hydro-Québec, mining companies like IOC, and forestry companies."

The ITUM said it will never compromise on territorial protection, and that it opposes all development on their land without their consent, including challenging the Romaine River project in Quebec courts. The press release chastises the Quebec and Canadian governments for "ignor[ing] the Indian title and other Aboriginal rights since Confederation".

Protestors blocked Route 138 two weeks ago in protest of Plan Nord, using spruce trees and their own bodies to barricade the road for all but essential deliveries. On October 16, police broke up the demonstration, opening up the strategic road for regular usage.



A second blockade was erected briefly at the Sept-Îles exit a week later, but disbanded after speaking with the Sûreté du Québec.

## Stornoway Diamonds receives Renard mining lease

Over a decade after discovering the markers of a large diamond deposit, the Renard mining project is closer to realization. The Quebec ministry of natural resources issued Stornoway Diamond Corporation a 20-year mining lease for the project last week.

Stornoway predicts the mine – to be built about 250 kilometres from Mistissini and 350 kilometres from Chibougamau – will have an 11-year life. The 1400-metre depth of the shaft also promises, according to Stornoway, to maximize the chances of finding additional materials.

Renard was originally a joint venture between Quebec's mining department and Ashton Diamonds. Stornoway acquired Ashton and its 50% of the project in 2007, and purchased the remainder from Quebec last year in exchange for 37% ownership.

The lease represented one of the last remaining hurdles in attaining approval for the project.

The company expects to receive a certificate of authorization from the min-

istry of environment this year, giving full approval to begin construction. The other delay is more tangible: the road leading to the mine is less than half finished, about 100 kms of its 240-kilometre route.

The project's on-schedule approval should ease shareholder worries about Stornoway's finances. The initial costs of the project are predicted to be more than \$800 million. The company's market value is less than 10% of this, forcing them to obtain debt-financing contracts with several banks. The company is confident the operating margin of the mine will make up for the sizable investment.

## Metal band Elderoth releases debut album

Elderoth is a Montreal-based heavy metal band comprised of singer and lead guitarist Collin McGee (a member of the Cree Nation of Wemindji), rhythm guitarist Denis Stoisin and drummer David Gagné. Recently, the band released their first self-titled album.

Although the label "heavy metal" allows people to lapse back into their preconceived notions of the genre, Elderoth is not your average metal band. Throughout the album's eight songs, Elderoth combines elements of progressive rock, such as backing synth lines and operatic vocals, with metal staples like



concussive drumming and virtuosic guitar solos.

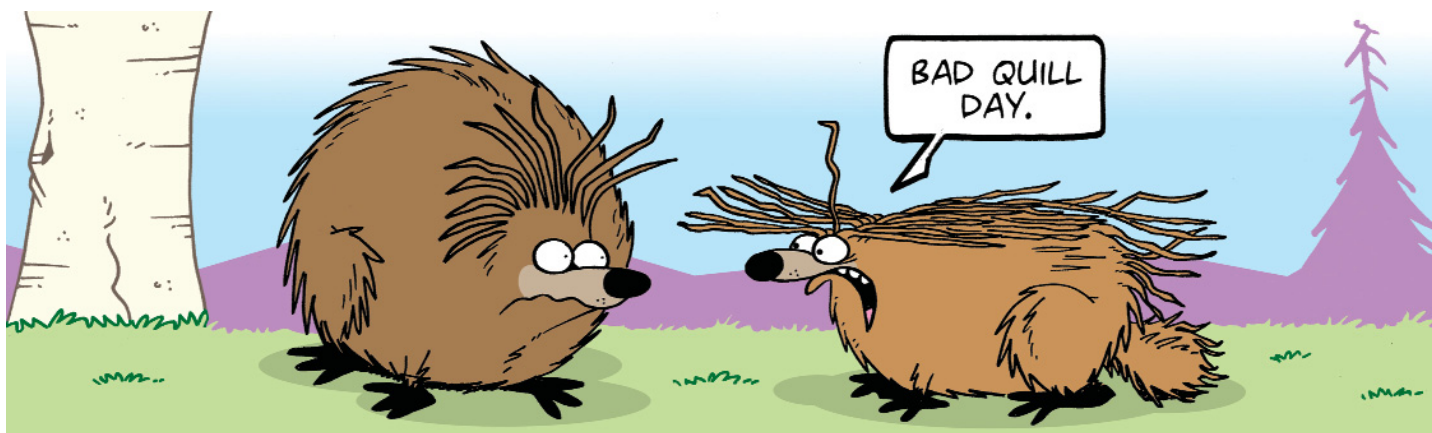
Elderoth's combination of progressive rock and heavy metal works best when one of these genres comes to the forefront. The chugging guitar riffs during the choruses of *Fallen* are one of the purest metal moments of the album and refer back to a time when Iron Maiden captured the heavy-metal zeitgeist. *Forgotten* is built upon a returning guitar riff which turns into an expansive and technically impressive solo at the song's end.

Elderoth's progressive tendencies create some of the more orchestral moments on the album. The intro to *In the Rain* is a catchy synth hook that wouldn't be out of place in a club. *Cursed* has a dreamy epic synth and vocal intro which transitions smoothly into frantic guitar work and drumming.

Overall, Elderoth's album is a strong first release and who knows what the future will hold for this band.

For more info: [elderoth.com](http://elderoth.com)

Comic strip courtesy of Tundra Comics: [www.tundracomics.com](http://www.tundracomics.com)



"IT MAY BE THAT THE NAME, THE SLOGAN, 'PLAN NORD' IS FINISHED, BUT I CANNOT IMAGINE THAT THE NEW QUEBEC GOVERNMENT WILL PUT A HALT ON THE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, WHICH ARE PROVEN TO BE FEASIBLE."



## Plan Nord or Plan Mort?

### The Grand Chief discusses the future of mining development in the North

by Amy German

There is no doubt that the political shift from the Liberals under Jean Charest to a Parti Québécois led by Pauline Marois has created a different economic environment within Quebec.

In the PQ's first week in office the former Liberal government's much-prided "Plan Nord" for natural resource development in the north was being redubbed the "Plan Mort" by critics who think the sweeping changes of the new regime may scare off foreign investors and developers that had been previously gung-ho.

But is this really the case? Is the Plan Nord really "mort" or simply on hold?

*The Nation* spoke with Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come to see what is happening within the economic machine of the north in order to separate fact from fiction.

**The Nation:** *Has the shift from Jean Charest's government to a new PQ cabinet under Pauline Marois made for any*

*changes for the plan for development in Eeyou Istchee in regards to the Plan Nord?*

**Grand Chief:** That is yet to be seen. We will watch carefully to see how things unfold. The new government, and in particular the new Minister of Natural Resources, Martine Ouellet, has made some very disparaging comments about the Plan Nord as articulated by Jean Charest and the former Liberal government. For example, she has said that the Plan Nord was simply a marketing trick, that it was too favourable to the mining companies and it was too light on the social component of the plan as well as the infrastructure component.

Ouellet, however, has also said very clearly that her government intends to continue northern development, and she has specifically talked about having something like the "Société du Plan Nord", the entity which the Liberal government created to coordinate

northern development and which is already in the pipeline.

She has also talked about the PQ platform promise of increasing the royalties to the government coming from mining companies. To me, it seems that the new government intends to continue with the same general direction, but they may feel the need to put their own branding on it.

It is also very noteworthy that recently the media reported that Marois, in her discussions with leading French entrepreneurs, reaffirmed her government's commitment to continue to develop the North while respecting the Indigenous and First Nations peoples who occupy the territory. And in fact, while in France, Marois and her entourage began using the phrase "Plan Nord" again in describing their government's objectives. I fully expect that the new government will maintain a substantial initiative for the development of the North.



**TN:** *The Plan Nord now keeps being referred to as the “Plan Mort”. From your perspective is this project really dead? Or is this just talk?*

**GC:** It may be that the name, the slogan, “Plan Nord” is finished, but I cannot imagine that the new Quebec government will put a halt on the resource-development projects, which are proven to be feasible. Proponents of development projects will continue to work on their projects whether or not the provincial government tries to frame it as part of their own overall strategy and their own plan for the North. The development of the resources in the North, including in Eeyou Istchee, is driven by important factors in the global economy and the demand for raw materials particularly in emerging economies of the world, like China, India and Brazil. Resource development projects within Eeyou Istchee become possible not because a provincial government, of any political stripe, decides to have a plan. These projects are driven by primary business considerations.

**TN:** *Is the Cree world still seeing as much economic activity and interest in the North as they did prior to the last election?*

**GC:** There will always be ups and downs in an economy that relies on the development of natural resources. Right now, there appears to be a bit of a downturn in the scale of some of the mineral exploration occurring within Eeyou Istchee. This is primarily a result of a downturn in the economy of China, and the resulting decrease in the production of goods by that country. However, resource development is continuing, and there are new companies almost every day exploring for minerals within our territory. For the reasons which I mentioned before having to do with conditions of the global economy the general trend will likely see an increase in the global search for raw materials, and this will continue to have important ramifications for

Quebec and for Eeyou Istchee for some time into the future.

**TN:** *Was the Governance Agreement in any way contingent on the Plan Nord?*

**GC:** When I came into office in 2009, there were two things that struck me. First, Premier Charest had just recently announced the Plan Nord, which would see an investment of some \$80 billion over a 25-year period to support and facilitate the development of natural resources largely taking place within Eeyou Istchee. I also saw that there were problems with the governance regime within our territory, particularly with the MBJ (Municipalité de Baie James). I found that Quebec had transferred very important planning powers to this entity without consulting the Cree Nation. In effect, major levers for controlling what happens in the territory were transferred to the non-Native municipalities in the region and excluded the Crees. This happened in spite of the fact that the Crees form the majority of the region’s population and even though we occupy the entire territory. This was clearly not a situation that we could tolerate. I said at the time that this was a form of “apartheid” and that I would work hard to abolish the MBJ.

Early on, I met with Charest to discuss both issues – governance of the territory and the Plan Nord. I told him that the governance of the North needed to be fixed. I told him that economic development and governance are closely tied together. If the governance regime is not aligned with demographic realities, and the realities of Cree land use, then there was a danger that the Cree people would be excluded from accessing the benefits associated with economic development. Without the inclusion of the Cree Nation in the governance of the territory, we would not be able to support the Plan Nord. This is what I told Charest. He understood this, and it was on the basis of this understanding that we were able to successfully conclude our Governance Agreement. And yes, MBJ will be abolished.



**TN:** *Will the Crees be seeing any political changes as a result of the provincial election?*

**GC:** Internally, within the Cree Nation, I do not see any changes either politically or administratively as a result of the outcome of the recent Quebec election. We have our priorities, we have our vision, we have our objectives. These will not change. It may be that our strategies to move forward on our priorities will need to be looked at and adapted to the new political realities in Quebec, but we are essentially moving forward with Cree priorities. We have a Nation to continue to build and that will remain our focus.

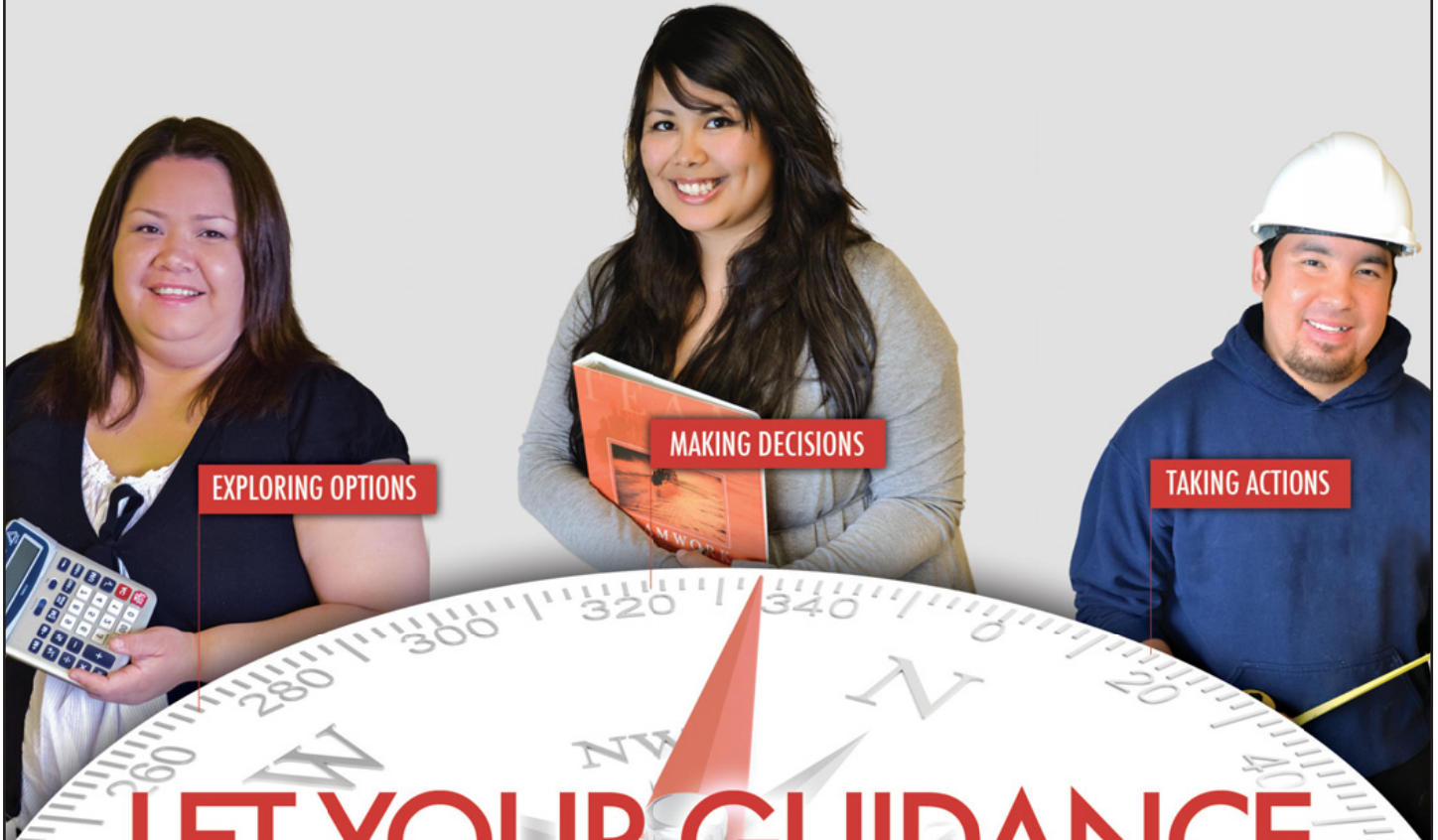
**TN:** *Have you spoken with Marois’ new government since the election? If so, what were the results of your discussions?*

**GC:** As of the time of this interview, there has not yet been a date fixed for my first meeting with Pauline Marois. Just after the election results were announced I wrote to Marois to congratulate her as the first woman premier of Quebec. I told her that I look forward to working with her govern-



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ment, and that I also look forward to our first meeting.

In reply, Marois sent me a kind invitation to the inauguration of her cabinet, which I accepted. At this event, I had a chance to greet her personally and she told me that her government's relationship with the Cree would be on a nation-to-nation basis. Further, she said she was looking forward to our

**"THE CREE NATION MUST BE INVOLVED AS FULL PARTNERS IN ANY DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR EYYOU ISTCHEE."**

first meeting and to continue to build upon past agreements.

The inauguration was also an opportunity to meet other ministers, including the minister of natural resources, minister of education, minister of health and minister of justice. I took that opportunity to inform them of the various Cree files and our expectations for partnership and continuing to build a good working relationship with the government.

I am confident that this first meeting will take place very soon, and I am expecting it to be positive.

**TN:** *If you haven't spoken to the new government, what issues will you be looking to address with them upon meeting?*

**GC:** When that first meeting with Marois takes place, I will express the Cree view that we are willing and ready to work with any government that shares our vision of development within Eeyou Istchee, and that is prepared to work for the collective benefit of the Cree Nation, Jamésien and all Quebecers.

In particular, I will emphasize the importance of having an effective process in place to ensure proper implementation of our Governance Agreement. Our communities are waiting for this, and the Jamésien municipalities are waiting for this as well. This must be a priority and it

must be done well. Additionally, when we developed our "Cree Vision of Plan Nord", we set out a list of projects which we expect to be implemented as part of any northern development thrust, regardless of what slogan or banner it takes place under. These projects include housing, transportation infrastructure and energy projects.

I will bring these projects to Marois' attention.

I will also mention to Marois that our vision of northern development requires that any development within Eeyou Istchee meet our standards of social acceptability and that projects must have our prior consent and result in benefits for our communities. I will reiterate that the Cree Nation must be involved as full partners in any development plan for Eeyou Istchee.

**TN:** *The Cree Nation has been focused on education and training to ensure that Crees will be able to have full participation in the work place. Will there be any changes made to the programs now that certain projects may not go through?*

**GC:** As stated, it is my view that regardless of the ups and downs of the global economy, the general trend will be for a greater demand for resources within Eeyou Istchee. We must prepare ourselves to take full advantage of this future. It is my intention to increase our focus on the enhancement of skills, training and professional development of our Cree people. We must not, as a Nation, allow the opportunity to be truly the "masters of our own destiny" slip through our fingers. We are now, as a Nation, at a moment of historic opportunity to become the major economic and political force within our territory. To

realize this opportunity we must rise to the challenge.

I will be spending considerable time in the coming months bringing this message to our people, and in particular, our youth. It will be up to our youth to take our Cree Nation to the next level and it will be up to our youth to learn what it means to genuinely be in control of Eeyou Istchee. I will be challenging our youth to be in the forefront of Indigenous governance and to take full advantage of the opportunities inherent in all of our major agreements with Quebec and Canada. This is really the next and most important challenge for the Cree Nation as a whole. We will all need to be on board with this initiative and we will all need to develop strategies and approaches to support our youth in achieving the opportunities presently before us as a young Aboriginal nation.

**TN:** *If the current plan for mining development that was under the Plan Nord fizzles out, what would be your plan of action to stimulate the economy for the people of the Cree Nation?*

**GC:** First of all, the Plan Nord was not just about mining development. It was a more comprehensive plan involving other economic sectors as well including tourism, forestry, energy, bio-food production, transportation, wildlife and protected areas. These are all sectors that we are interested in as well, and we will continue to explore opportunities in all of them. We are also very interested in the different kinds of infrastructure projects that will be needed to promote these sectors.

So there is a great deal of activity that we foresee and many sectors, some old and some new, that we anticipate being a part of. We will be supportive of projects in a wide range of sectors and which are in keeping with our approach to the rational and sustainable development of the region and which are in keeping with our approach to the requirement of social acceptability.

*Before*



&



*After*

## Grand weight loss

**Ashley Iserhoff discusses his battle of the bulge and what he has gained**

by Amy German

Having been in the public eye of the Cree world since the mid-1990s, Deputy Grand Chief Ashley Iserhoff looks almost like a shadow of his former self. The political figure has lost over 60 pounds of excess body fat and revamped his entire lifestyle in the process.

Now a lean, mean, political machine, Iserhoff's decision to give up his poor eating habits and commit to change came when he was facing borderline diabetes with his weight at an all-time high.

"When I look back at where I was five or six years ago at 303 pounds and compare it to where I am now, I am pretty amazed at all of the choices I have made to get here," said Iserhoff.

Despite being 6'4", Iserhoff knew that this was just too much.

When his weight finally hit the all-time high, Iserhoff found himself fearing the worst as he, like many Crees, comes from a family with a history of both diabetes and heart disease and both were distinct possibilities should he have continued down the path he was on.

But this, as it turned out, was not his fate.

While he remembers being slim as a child, Iserhoff said his weight changed right before he hit his teens, just after experiencing a deep trauma. At age of 12, Iserhoff witnessed his brother Matthew being hit by a garbage truck which tragically resulted in the loss of his leg.

"I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD BE ABLE TO DO WHAT I DO TODAY – GETTING ON A TREADMILL AND ACTUALLY RUNNING. I TOOK A LOT OF STEPS TO GET THERE, IT WASN'T AN OVERNIGHT THING."

"After that food became a reassurance to help me deal with what I saw," said Iserhoff.

As a teen, however, Iserhoff was quite physically active and this staved off major weight gain despite his eating habits. It was when he moved from Montreal to the North that his weight began to increase. However, this was not what pushed Iserhoff's weight over the edge.

Instead, it was living a lifestyle that leads many to gain the pounds – being on

the road for work. The on-the-road lifestyle of staying in hotels, keeping odd hours to catch flights, long hours of driving, dining in restaurants and eating when you can instead of when you would like are common factors in weight gain for the many who travel for work.

"That was the thing with work – I was in meetings all day, no matter where I was. I would have breakfast, lunch and then big suppers and then after supper I would return to my hotel room and just lay there having something to snack on before I went to sleep," explained Iserhoff.

Realizing that he was on the brink of serious health problems, Iserhoff took the first important step in changing his lifestyle and saw a dietician to find out



what he was doing wrong when it came to his eating habits.

By following some simple tips from the dietician, he was able to drop almost 25 pounds rather quickly. These tips included giving up pop entirely and eating out of hunger instead of entertainment while sitting in front of the TV.

After that Iserhoff's weight hovered around 270-278 pounds for several years, but this was not the end of his weight-loss journey.

It was actually seeing Mississauga community members out jogging and engaging in other forms of exercise that motivated him to take his health to a new level.

"In the fall of 2009, I started using a trainer. I never thought I would be able to do what I do today – getting on a treadmill and actually running. I took a lot of steps to get there, it wasn't an overnight thing," said Iserhoff.

Iserhoff began by working with the team at Lemon Cree to try out different programs and started exercising to find out what he liked and what worked for him. And, like a piece of a puzzle falling into place, healthy living as a lifestyle began to make more sense as his diet and exercise regime changed.

"If you eat something that's unhealthy – like poutine, pizza or any fried food – and you are exercising, you are still adding calories to your diet and this just doesn't mix.

You have to maintain a balance between what you eat and exercising – these two things go hand in hand," said Iserhoff.

Iserhoff now employs portion control when it comes to his meals. With the help of his nutritionist, he understands what an appropriate portion is for his metabolism and he knows how to do this within the context of his lifestyle.

Though he travels a lot and often ends up eating in restaurants as a result, Iserhoff is much more cautious about what he orders. Instead of going for the standard steak and fries that had always been his fallback meal, he now orders a steak and salad and the portion of steak is much smaller. Iserhoff said he has grown to love salads as part of his new lifestyle. Plus, he eats a lot more fish as it is a healthier menu option.

"The way I used to eat would be to go up and serve myself the same size portion twice and this was a very large portion. This really added to the weight. Today I have decreased the amount of food I consume. I try to eat between 2000-3000 calories a day. If I am exercising I will do this, but if I'm not exercising on my day off then I will consume a lot less," said Iserhoff.

Whether he's on the road or at home, exercise is a daily must unless he has chosen to purposely take the day off to give

his body a break. He squeezes in workouts whenever he can and mixes it up.

As Deputy Grand Chief, it sometimes requires him to be in meetings from morning to night. If he can't squeeze in an hour at a local gym, Iserhoff says he'll go for a brisk walk during his lunch hour to get his metabolism moving. He also likes to try whatever local program is available in that community to switch it up as that helps to keep things interesting.

As a result, Iserhoff is now happier and healthier than he has ever been. He says he feels much more functional in his job as the exercise has made his stress levels go down and he's more comfortable in his own skin.

"When I first started in office, I did not manage my time very well nor did I eat very well and I paid for it with my health. I was making stupid decisions in terms of what I was eating and I really didn't like myself as a result, especially the way I looked in photos. My face was really big and I was wearing a size 44-46 in pants. I am now a 36," said Iserhoff.

Over the years he has lost 60 pounds in excess fat, gained back weight in muscle mass and he is hoping to get down to an ideal weight of 240. Keeping on the straight and narrow, no doubt he will one day reach this goal.



Iserhoff began by working with the team over at Lemon Cree

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# Diabetic patient talk

## Two medical professionals on the reality of diabetes in Eeyou Istchee

by Amy German

What used to be a death sentence in the time before insulin, diabetes has become a much more manageable disease, provided the patient is willing to put in the effort and live a healthier life.

For the newly diagnosed, however, testing positive for high blood sugar can be a terrifying event, particularly if they have seen a loved one struggle with the disease.

diabetics has evolved over the years and is now a lot more personalized.

"The big difference between now and 10 years ago is that people wouldn't come to the clinic back then and ask for the test because they were scared and didn't want to know. Today they want to find out and this is a big change.

"They know now that the earlier you find out, the better it is because you can

fears so to empower him/her and get him/her on the right track.

This involves not only taking their medication but learning to eat well and exercise. As Laliberté explained, there is no specific diet for diabetics as everyone needs to eat well whether or not they have this disease.

According to Gosal, one of the major changes he is seeing in the North is the profile of who is being diagnosed. Ten to 15 years ago, the profile was of someone in their 40s or 50s or older who was overweight. But in recent years, there are more younger Crees who are afflicted. He and Laliberté are now seeing teens and adults in their early 20s as well as young pregnant women being diagnosed as well as the older generation.

While the rate of diabetes among Crees is significantly higher than that of the rest of Quebec, according to Gosal, the North isn't the only place where this is a problem.

"THEY KNOW NOW THAT THE EARLIER YOU FIND OUT, THE BETTER IT IS BECAUSE YOU CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT AND PREVENT THE COMPLICATIONS."

According to Dr. Kavi Gosal and nurse and diabetes educator Monique Laliberté – both Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJD) employees who have worked in the communities for a few decades between them – treatment for

do something about it and prevent the complications," said Laliberté.

When a patient is newly diagnosed, not only does the expert team in each of the communities do their best to find treatment options that work for that patient, the team addresses the patient's

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"It is not just here that we are seeing younger diabetics being diagnosed, but it does happen to be more pronounced here. The same thing, however, is being seen all over the world in places like India, Saudi Arabia and China," said Gosal.

People around the world are now eating more than ever and eating more junk food than ever. Plus, they are more sedentary than before and this is what has contributed to the weight gain and, as a result, diabetes.

At the same time Gosal recognizes that managing the disease isn't as simple as telling his patients to lead a balanced lifestyle as it is much easier said than done.

The typical young family in the North will have working parents with young children who have activities after school and then have homework and other chores. The tendency is to cut corners wherever possible and eating convenient foods is a popular choice. Parents often will end up cutting out their own activities and this will often result in a weight gain that leads to diabetes.

"When they leave my office the rest of their lives have not changed. They still have their jobs to go to, they still have to pick up their kids and take them wherever they need to go, so me telling them that they have to do this, that and the other thing doesn't result in much change," said Gosal.

Instead, he and Laliberté work on putting the patient at the centre of the diabetes team. So having them meet with a nutritionist, a CHR, a nurse and a doctor, they are the ones who really call the shots. If the patient is not on board, nothing is going to happen.

When it comes to medication to treat diabetes, the approach the CBHSSJD is now using is much different from the model they used 10 years ago when everyone would have automatically been prescribed the same thing.

"Diabetes is a progressive disease. Over time the patient will be able to make less of their own insulin and so that is why you will eventually have to replace it altogether.

"We tell people that making insulin is not bad so if you don't make enough you should take some. That way your sugar will return to a normal level. It is the high sugar that causes complications and so if you can maintain your sugar at a normal level you are actually at less risk for complications," said Laliberté.

Besides the typical insulin injections that most people are familiar with, Laliberté explained, there are medications in pill form that are often prescribed.

One of the most popular is Glucosage, a medication that works on

"ONCE YOU START THE INSULIN, THE PATIENT WILL REGAIN THEIR ENERGY AND OFTEN WE HEAR FROM PATIENTS THAT IF THEY HAD KNOWN HOW THEY WERE GOING TO FEEL THEY WOULD HAVE STARTED IT EARLIER."

the insulin resistance and makes the patient's own existing insulin work better. This will also not leave the patient in a situation where they have low blood sugar.

There are other types of pills that force the pancreas to make more insulin and then there is insulin. The pills will only work for as long as you have enough insulin in your pancreas.

While some individuals may be afraid of taking insulin for whatever reason, both medical practitioners stressed that it is important to take the medication properly as if you need insulin, even starving yourself for a day won't bring your sugar down.

"It also makes sense. Once you start the insulin, the patient will regain their energy and often we hear from patients that if they had known how they were going to feel they would have started it earlier," said Laliberté.

Outside of taking their medication properly, when someone is newly diagnosed, both practitioners recommend that the patient start moving around a bit more as a means of treating their diabetes.

This has become a new focus. Instead of immediately focusing on a patient's diet, incorporating a bit more exercise is more sustainable as a lifestyle change.

"We try not to focus too much on food because people tend to overdo it, starve themselves and then give up two weeks later.

"We tell them to start moving around a bit more. Maybe once or twice a week they can make the decision to walk instead of drive to work. When you start to exercise more, you tend to want to eat better," said Laliberté.

The good chemicals the body releases tend to make people feel better and that is like a natural medicine, explained Gosal. This can also help diabetic patients on a whole other level as diabetics are 50% more likely to suffer from depression.

Gosal suggests picking something that you like instead of just going to the gym otherwise you aren't going to stick with it.

"What we find is that people will start doing this kind of thing and then it will drop off at around week 8-10.

"Twelve weeks seems to be the cut-off. If you are able to continue doing an activity for 12 weeks you tend to be able to keep going as it has now become part of your daily routine. I tell them to pick something that they like and usually the most obvious choice is walking," explained Gosal.

And, with making these kinds of lifestyle changes, a healthier and happier life is possible.

If you suspect that you may have diabetes or just want to learn more about the disease, contact your local clinic.



Dancing for fun, fitness and health was a major component of a children's workshop at the Timmins Diabetes Expo that was provided by Melissa Kelly, owner / operator of the Melissa Kelly Dance Academy (MKDA) in Timmins. She is pictured here with participating school-children from the Timmins area and from Mattagami First Nation.

## Aboriginal organizations lead fight against diabetes

by Xavier Kataquapit

The fourth annual Timmins Diabetes Expo October 18 and 19 has helped strengthen the fight against diabetes in northern Ontario. Aboriginal organizations and area health-care agencies have been working together for four years in prevention, awareness, education and support concerning diabetes through events targeted to professionals, the public at large and schoolchildren.

This year's event featured nationally renowned speaker Dr. Michael Vallis, a clinical psychologist who specializes in diabetes, and Melissa Kelly, a professional dance instructor and owner of the Melissa Kelly Dance Academy (MKDA) in Timmins.

Timmins Diabetes Expo (TDE) committee chairs Julie St-Onge, Canadian Diabetes Association, and Richard Aubin, Métis Nation of

Ontario, noted that the two-day event has increased its reach to professionals and the public by at least 50%.

"We have a great committee dedicated to this event and some really wonderful sponsors who I want to thank for their support," said St-Onge.

The expo featured three separate events with Vallis speaking to health-care professionals and the public at large while Kelly facilitated a series of workshops to local schoolchildren.

Vallis' message in his workshops centred around his expertise in behaviour sciences with a focus on encouraging change in relation to managing diabetes. He did so through a presentation punctuated with humour and helpful tips.

"My job today is knowledge translation, which is to take behaviour sciences and present them to nurses and

dieticians who can incorporate the basic skills to their practice. I am also trying my best to encourage the public to recognize that through behaviour change they can better manage diabetes," said Vallis.

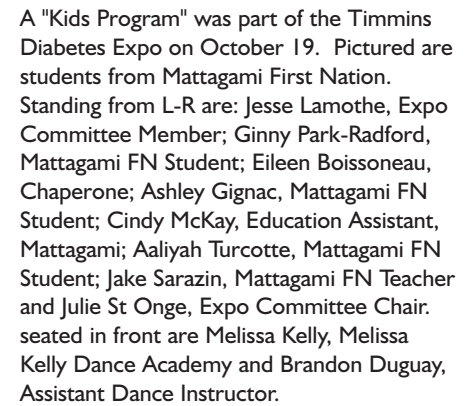
The professional event was held at the Porcupine Health Unit and featured a workshop to local health-care professionals in person and through live teleconferencing using the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN) to health-care workers in Kapuskasing, Kirkland Lake, New Liskeard, North Bay, Moose Factory, Fort Albany and Hearst.

"It is important for us as Aboriginal health-care professionals to provide as much assistance as possible to our people and the public at large to combat what has become an epidemic in First Nation communities dealing with



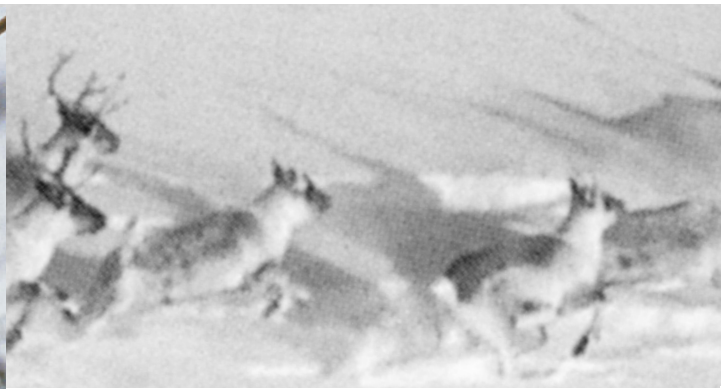
A cultural workshop led by Claveau incorporated traditional crafts and Aboriginal teachings on health. Committee members Hillary Deyne and Robert Smith also held a healthy eating workshop titled, “Think About Your Drink”, which focused on healthy drinking choices for children.

The event was a one-stop information source that featured displays by area organizations. Sponsors included Northern Diabetes Health Network, Canadian Diabetes Association, Wabun Health Services, Timmins Native Friendship Centre, Misiway Milopemahtesewin, Métis Nation of Ontario, Porcupine Health Unit, VON Diabetes Education Centre, Timmins Family Health Team and the Aboriginal People's Alliance of Northern Ontario.



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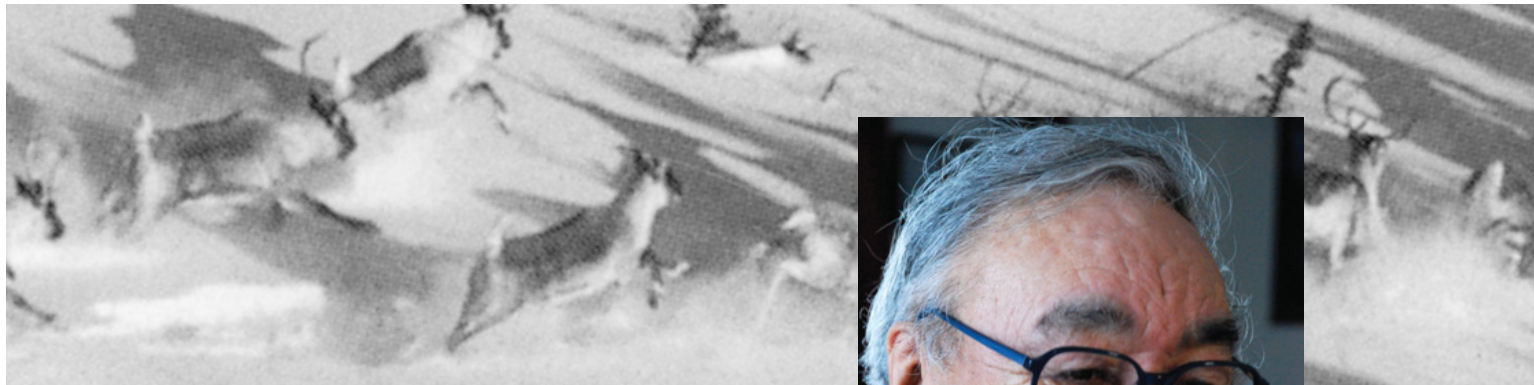
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## Growing Up

Told by Joseph Guanish, Kawawachikamach  
Translated and transcribed by Brian Webb  
[Beesum-communications.com/legends](http://Beesum-communications.com/legends)



Joseph Guanish of Kawawachikamach

*When you were young, who told you the stories and legends?*

Our grandmother, of course, the one who raised me. She was the one who brought me up. My parents did not raise me. My grandmother and grandfather took me in and brought me up. They raised me so that I would learn the ways of life from the bush.

One time, grandmother and I had a hard time while we were way out in the bush. There is a river called Mushuau Sibi. She went hunting for caribou to get hides for making moccasins and snowshoe lacing. Children's coats were made from caribou hides – these were winter coats. Grandmother got sick. She almost died because she was so cold. She was working on meat and would run out every now and then. She suddenly became sick and had spasms. She had those spasms for the entire night. I already knew well how to hunt and how to lay traps. I was also taught how to set the wooden traps and otter traps.

*The deadfall ones?*

Yes. This is what my grandfather taught me. He taught me everything. At first, I would just tag along with him and observe. And when I got big-

ger, I started doing the things myself and he would just give me advice. That was a very difficult time for my grandparents to raise me.

One time, my grandfather killed 61 caribou. We placed the caribou in a shelter made from young trees. He was remembering people who would be coming through as they moved camp – he would give them the caribou. If there weren't that many people, he'd give a family 10 caribou.

She was a great hunter. She didn't have any children of her own. She was my mother's aunt. She was married twice. This is what I remember from her. I sensed that grandmother really loved me. She'd leave to go hunting at night. I didn't know what time it was during the night. I had already gone to bed. She hadn't brought any food the night before. Still no trace of dawn and she was already leaving. I sensed that she really loved me. I said to her, "It seems that you're not cooking." They were taking care other children as well. "Are you not cooking for us to eat?"

"Your grandfather didn't bring anything home to eat." She was getting ready to go hunting. This was how determined she was to raise the children. The other children were her sibling's children. She was given children to look after because she was such a great hunter. She was truly compassionate. My mother's aunt raised 14 of us children.



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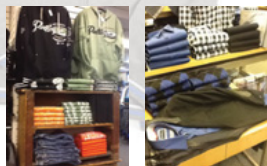
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# Great expectations

## Conference for Aboriginal entrepreneurs addresses many development issues

By Daniel David

About 40 years ago, a provincial premier said he'd bulldoze Indian rights, land claims or any Indian community that got in the way of his mega-project.

Big business and governments didn't bother with Indigenous rights back then.

Things have changed.

Today, powerful law firms churn out legal opinions advising governments and international corporations about every change in Native policy or law.

Billions of dollars are at stake, so governments and business want to smooth out wrinkles with Aboriginal peoples before they turn into major hurdles.

That's exactly why the Aboriginal Human Resources Council (AHRC) hosted a conference in Ottawa Oct. 15 and 16.

AHRC enticed Aboriginal entrepreneurs with "500 projects in the energy, mining and forestry pipeline with a combined worth of \$500 billion", including Quebec's Plan Nord, the Ring of Fire in Ontario, potash in Saskatchewan, biofuels in Alberta, and mining in BC and north of 60.

The key message at the Aboriginal Entrepreneur Conference and Trade Show (AECTS) in Ottawa was that development is good.

Somewhere, protesters might be trying to stop an oil pipeline or asking questions about the environmental impacts of Quebec's Plan Nord – but not at this conference.

Speaker after speaker talked about common goals, beneficial relationships, jobs, training, shared wealth, increased opportunities, improved lives and better communities.

It's about time, said Kelly Lendsay, President and CEO of AHRC. It's something he's been working toward ever since the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 15 years ago.

"The recommendation was that we need to do more to develop and accelerate labour-market strategies, engage employers. And we need an organization that can facilitate partnerships bringing the private sector together with Aboriginal communities, educators, unions and so on," Lendsay said.

The conference sponsors read like a Who's Who of industry and government, including Aboriginal Affairs, Natural Resources, Human Resources and Skills Development, and Ontario Aboriginal Affairs.

On the corporate side were Scotiabank, CN, Encana, SNC Lavalin, Syncrude and others.

There were nearly 400 registrants. About half were Aboriginal people from communities like Oujé-Bougoumou, Whitesand, Wasauksin and Chisasibi.

They took in panel discussions and presentations on land management, financing, training and hiring.

Some networked to share ideas, pitch projects or partnerships. Others spread business cards like confetti, betting on luck to make connections. Others were there to learn.

Bertie Wapachee, Assistant General Manager at the Chisasibi Business Service Centre, was looking for partners sensitive to Cree cultural values, to learn more about renewable energy projects and long-term job creation.

"Take our territory, for instance. There are so many resources there. We could develop projects but we want to get back to sustainable ways. We're not doing it now, but it's something we've been promoting for centuries," Wapachee said.

"Once the resources have been extracted," he added, "what will we have left?"



Randy Bosum, Oujé-Bougoumou

photo by Daniel David

Randy Bosum said economic sustainability drew him to the conference. He's a deputy chief but also Vice President of Oujé-Bougoumou Inc.

"It's my first time here but I attend a lot of other events like this," he said. "I always look at the program, the themes and the presentations."

It might seem that the sole purpose of the conference is to convince Aboriginal groups and entrepreneurs to jump on the development bandwagon. But a few presenters had words of caution too.

Chris Sankey has been trying to get more jobs for people in Tshimshian territory in coastal industries near Prince Rupert, BC. Like some others, he reminded folks that development must be more than profit and numbers. It's about people too.

Sankey said corporation executives and senior government managers should commit to increased hiring and training for Aboriginal peoples, but the message might not "be flowing through to the ground level".

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The flu campaign starts at the beginning of November. Listen to the radio for local info.



# A five-step program

## How to deal with development in your community

by Daniel David

Kelly Lendsay won't let up. He's a relentless advocate for a five-step plan for development in Aboriginal communities. He designed the agenda at the Aboriginal Entrepreneurs Conference and Trade Show (AECTS) around these five steps.

Here's why: "There's a big focus on resource development," Lendsay explains, "because what's under development, particularly in northern Canada, are natural resources.

"You're in a remote area. A company wants to develop, to engage with your community to create opportunities. A road and an airport are going to come in. How ready is your community to a change in its social and economic fabric?"

It isn't just how an individual entrepreneur might take advantage of business opportunities. It's more about how Aboriginal communities can avoid becoming roadkill in the path of development by participating in development on their own terms.

"This is where I get really excited. What if employers, Aboriginal communities and entrepreneurs looked at this in terms of their accountabilities? What can each of them do? What roles do they play? And if they work together, we can actually make these opportunities happen faster and take full advantage of them."

Lendsay says it all begins with an assessment by the community.

"Tell me what the 10 or 20 opportunities for the community are and put them on the table today. Educate our communities about these opportunities. That requires the companies to share that with us.

"Vice versa, companies want to know that our communities are getting ready to take advantage of these opportunities. That's how we work



AHRC President & CEO, Kelly Lendsay (L) shares a moment with Hon. Jackson Lafferty, NWT Deputy Min. of Education, Culture and Employment.

courtesy AECTS

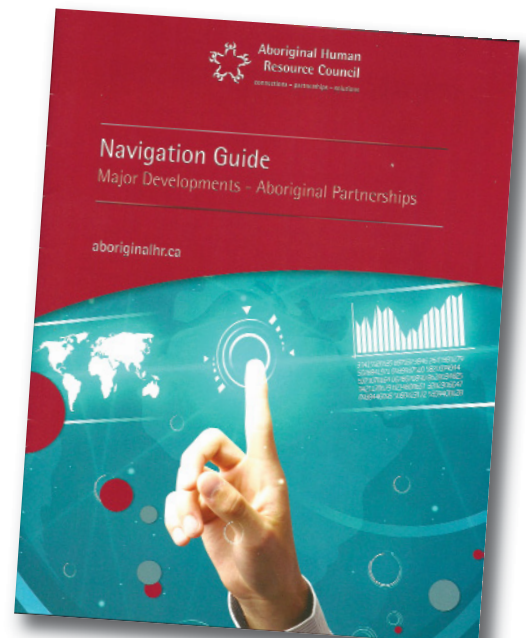
together as a team toward the same objectives.

"Entrepreneurs, contracts and employment for Aboriginal people."

That's just step one. Other steps include planning and design, start up, operations and even wind down, planning for the end of a project.

You can visit the Aboriginal Human Resources Council (AHRC) website for more information or download the "Navigation Guide: Major Developments – Aboriginal Partnerships" at [www.aboriginalhr.ca](http://www.aboriginalhr.ca).

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# Hi ho silver screen

## Cree filmmaker debuts short film at ACTRA festival

by Julian Mei

Standing on 80 acres of land owned by his friend in Manitoba last April, Cree actor and director Erland Campbell had an idea – let's film a western.

Equipped with nothing more than a digital camera and a .16 gauge shotgun, Campbell and his friend filmed *Revenge On the High Plains*, a short that debuted at the ACTRA Short Film Festival at Montreal's Rialto Theatre on October 10.

The story focuses on a man who intends to seek vengeance on the person who killed his family.

The video, even by short film standards, is brief, with only a three-minute run time from the opening to closing credits.

Campbell appears on screen and speaks into the camera explaining to the audience what happened. The film ends with Campbell shooting the gun into the air and uttering the famous Hollywood western line: "You better run, you yellow-belly."

"I always wanted to do a western so this was in a way cathartic for me," explained Campbell. "Nothing was planned. It was a very simple storyline and (the closing sentence) was just a take on the old southern-American saying."

Having spent his childhood living in various places across Manitoba, the 55-year-old Campbell set out to see the world when he was 17, spending time in California and England. Experiencing a variety of cultures shaped Campbell into the person he is today and influenced his career aspirations as an artist.

Campbell has appeared in a variety of films, most notably a brief spot in the hit Hollywood movie *300*. A jack-of-all-trades, Campbell also teaches ballroom dance, has been in a band and works as a communications professional.

He joined ACTRA, the Canadian actors' union, six years ago and has been living in Montreal ever since. He always needs to keep busy with his acting and filmmaking. As he points out, it is almost like an addiction not only for him, but for other performers too.

"I remember seeing a study that showed actors (and other forms of artists) had the same brain chemistry as drug addicts," said Campbell. "We always have to feed that addiction by performing, whether it be acting or dancing or singing."

The need to be constantly performing was evident at the ACTRA festival as Campbell appeared on screen twice that evening. He also played a role in another short enti-



Cree actor and director Erland Campbell

tled *Eupnea*, which won the jury's pick for best film at the festival.

*Eupnea* tells the story of a young professional woman haunted by the death of her sister, who drowned when she was a child. Campbell plays the role of a spiritual leader who tries to help the main character find inner peace.

The ACTRA event was a chance for many actors, like Campbell, to celebrate the short films they had created throughout the year. Many of the films are not intended for commercial release and the night was more of an opportunity for the acting community to share their work with each other and their friends and family.

"Most of the people there don't care who the audience is," said Campbell. "They are just looking for the opportunity to create and show their work to others."

Campbell was pleased with the reception of both films he appeared in. He is also hoping to continue working in the western genre.

"I have another friend who owns a rifle and a horse," he said. "I'm thinking we can do something with that, only next time make the film a bit longer."

Campbell has not yet decided whether or not he will be entering *Revenge On the High Plains* into other festivals.

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## The great giveaway

The Conservative bulldozers are roaring, trampling over our parliamentary democracy, our rights and, soon, through the rivers that are vital to many First Nations.

The federal government recently tabled Bill C-45, a bloated, 457-page assault on the common good that it dishonestly said is only intended to implement changes already announced in last spring's federal budget. But it goes much further than that. The bill amends no fewer than 60 laws, most of them in an effort to give big business a free hand to ignore environmental, Aboriginal and social concerns in a blind pursuit of ever-bigger profits.

For First Nations people across Canada and the lands and rivers many bands depend on, however, Bill C-45 is a direct attack.

A small but crucial amendment to the Indian Act gives power to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs to call a referendum in any band to surrender lands in the band's territory. It's another step in the government's systematic campaign to weaken First Nations and open their territories up for exploitation by non-Native interests by progressively eliminating communal control over lands that were intended to be preserved in perpetuity for future generations.

It's important to note that a related bill now before Parliament explicitly sets out the core Conservative mindset toward Aboriginal sovereignty, much as it was expressed by the right-wing ideologue Tom Flanagan, a former adviser to Prime Minister Stephen Harper, in his book *First Nations, Second Thoughts*. In it, Flanagan argued reserves should essentially be reduced to the political equivalent of a municipality.

And sure enough, Saskatchewan Tory MP Rob Clarke, the sponsor of Bill C-428, the Indian Act Amendment and Replacement Act, echoed this goal in defending his proposal. "It will provide these First Nations with the same rights and responsibilities that rural and urban municipalities have today," he said.

In other words, the vital and constitutionally recognized principle of nation-to-nation relations between Ottawa and First Nations will be eliminated. And this, at the same time

many impoverished Aboriginal communities may be tempted by a pot of cash to surrender their most important asset: their lands. Future generations be damned.

That's the actual language in Bill C-45, by the way. A single vote at a band meeting called by the federal minister will be enough to trigger the "absolute surrender" of band territory. It would be an absolute surrender in more ways than one: the cultural and territorial integrity of a distinct people would be forever compromised.



Native fishery on the Skeena River at Moricetown, BC.

Keep in mind that these foundational changes to the political structure of First Nations governance are being made without any consultation or cooperation of the elected representatives of Canada's Native communities.

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo denounced the unilateralism in his reaction to the omnibus bill.

"When our people see no movement from the government to work with us, when they see backsliding, undermining and continuing threats and pressures on an already burdened popu-



## Rose Mining Project Public Comments Invited

As part of the strengthened and modernized *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012* (CEAA 2012) put in place to support the government's responsible resource development initiative, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency has determined that a federal environmental assessment is required for the proposed Rose Mining Project – Tantalum and Lithium located approximately 38 km north of Nemaska, in Québec. The Agency invites the public to comment on which aspects of the environment may be affected by this project and what should be examined during the environmental assessment.

The public can review and comment on the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Guidelines, a document that identifies the potential environmental effects to be taken into consideration and the information and analysis that needs to be included in the proponent's EIS.

Critical Elements Corporation is proposing the construction, operation and decommissioning of an open pit tantalum and lithium mine located approximately 38 km north of Nemaska, in Québec. As proposed, the project includes the operation of an open pit, possibly followed by underground mining, waste and tailings impoundment area, an industrial ore processing facility and the option of transforming concentrate off-site. The mine would produce about 4500 tonnes of ore per day over a 17-year life span.

Written comments must be submitted **by November 22, 2012** to:

Rose Mining Project – Tantalum and Lithium  
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency  
901 - 1550 d'Estimauville Avenue  
Quebec QC G1J 5E9  
Telephone: 418-649-6444  
Fax: 418-649-6443  
[ProjetRoseProject@ceaa-acee.gc.ca](mailto:ProjetRoseProject@ceaa-acee.gc.ca)

To view the draft EIS Guidelines or for more information, visit the Agency's website at [www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca](http://www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca) (registry reference number 80005). All comments received will be considered public.

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Copies of the draft EIS Guidelines are also available for viewing at the following locations:

Consistent with the transparency and public engagement elements of CEAA 2012, this is one of four opportunities for Canadians to comment on this project. Following this comment period, the Agency will finalize and issue the EIS Guidelines to the proponent. An application period for participant funding and a future public comment period related to the EIS will be announced later.

This project will be assessed using a science-based approach. If the project is permitted to proceed to the next phase, this project will continue to be subject to Canada's strong environmental laws, rigorous enforcement and follow-up, and increased fines for those who break the rules. To learn more about the Responsible Resource Development Initiative, please visit the website:  
<http://actionplan.gc.ca/en/page/r2d-dr2>.

Canada

lation, the flames only grow stronger," Atleo said. "Our people will not stand for it. Rightly so, there is growing anger and frustration."

Another section of the bill represents a clear and present danger for Native communities, especially in Northern British Columbia, where the giant petroleum corporation Enbridge wants to build a pipeline to ship Alberta oil to a shipping terminal at Kitimat on the BC coast. Unanimously opposed by First Nations governments, the Northern Gateway pipeline would follow and bisect many crucial salmon habitats that are the economic and cultural foundation of the region's original inhabitants. Enbridge has a long and sorry record of devastating oil spills along its existing pipeline network, especially in the United States.

None of these concerns will merit attention should Bill C-45 pass through Parliament as it is currently written.

**"FOR THE CONSERVATIVE  
GOVERNMENT, OIL PIPELINES  
WILL HAVE PRIORITY OVER THE  
USE OF CANADA'S RIVERS."**

Amendments to the Navigable Waters Act will exempt pipeline construction from the law's existing protection for oceans, lakes and rivers, while drastically limiting the number of waterways protected under the law.

It also gives corporations a legal avenue to reduce or eliminate existing requirements to protect fish habitats, and even allows them to renege on previously negotiated commitments to compensate stakeholders for habitats that were damaged or destroyed by their industrial activities.

Particularly for the First Nations of the Pacific Northwest, this omnibus bill is an ominous portent for the future. The obvious intent is to remove obstacles to the Enbridge pipeline through some of this country's most productive yet fragile natural environments. But all First Nations that depend on waterborne resources will eventually suffer.

Far fewer federal environmental assessments will be conducted on industrial projects. Provincial governments with widely differing environmental regulations and standards will often be left with the sole responsibility to assess their impact and sustainability.

"The net effect is that Canada's environment is less protected by the federal government than it ever has been before. They are piece by piece getting out of the business," commented Will Amos, director of the Ecojustice environmental law clinic at the University of Ottawa.

And the Conservative majority will bulldoze all this, and much more, through Parliament with a minimum of scrutiny and study, as was a previous omnibus bill last spring. First Nations and all other Canadians who value the environment, essential human rights and a transparent democracy will be the losers.





## UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

### We are all immigrants

by Xavier Kataquapit

I don't understand why so many people get upset about immigrants coming to this country. Of course, you have to remember I have a special view considering my people are the original inhabitants of this land so everybody else who came after us I view as immigrants.

The Europeans were the first large wave of immigrants to land on the shores of the Americas for all the same old reasons, such as the quest for wealth, resources and domination. Considering all of the terrible things that happened to the Native people of the Americas you would think we Aborigines would be very upset. After all, these new immigrants stepped in uninvited and took over our lands, sent in their missionaries to destroy our culture, traditions and spirituality, moved us from our nomadic hunting and gathering lands to small reserves and more or less did their best to try to eliminate us. Still, somehow we do not hold a huge grudge with these first immigrants and as survivors we are doing our best to deal with their on-going quest for riches.

So, you can imagine how confused I get when I hear some English, Polish, Russian, Italian, Ukrainian, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Swiss, Swedish, German or other people of European descent complain about more recent immigrants to this land. I find that really weird. Don't they know where they came from and why they came here? Don't they remember they were immigrants who came to Canada to seek their riches, better their lives or escape terrible conditions in their own countries? They all seem to be suffering from amnesia when it comes to this question of immigration. They seem to be a little slow also because they keep falling for right-wing governments fanning the flames of racism and bigotry by bringing the immigration issue to the surface again and again.

I have been to some Third-World countries so I understand very well why people want to come to our beautiful country to enjoy the opportunity to work and have a better life. This reminds me of why the Europeans came here actually. If we, as First-World countries, did a better job of making things more fair and equitable on this planet then people would have no need to emigrate as life would be as good for them in their own country as it is here in Canada. The problem is that most of our interest in Third-World countries has to do with trying to grab their resources, topple their governments so that we can put someone in place that will do our bidding and more or less keep people down.

Until we really see that we are all just one big family on this tiny, lucky little planet then we will keep taking advantage of

others and they will arrive at our doors in the same way the Europeans were looking for a new and better place to call home. I really think the average person is smart enough to understand that if we don't want to flood our country with new immigrants then we have to work very hard to make life better for the less fortunate in this world. We also have to realize that most of us came to this country as immigrants.

I love reading anything I can get my hands on regarding the history of this world. One of my favourite quotes is that, "the only thing we learn from history is that we don't learn anything from history". However, one sure thing is that if you study human beings and their historical actions it soon becomes clear that patterns of war, greed and domination prevail. What has to happen for us to realize there are better ways? It could start with simply not being sucked in by nasty people in power trying to keep us all fighting with each other and believing it is okay to hate others. It could start there.



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# CLASSIFIEDS

## PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Funding application for aboriginal students' retention projects First deadline: October 30th 2012. The fonds pour la persévérance scolaire des jeunes autochtones du Québec supports the retention of francophone and anglophone aboriginal students under 20 years of age in Quebec. Consult the following address: <http://www.ctreq.qc.ca/produits/outils/fondspersévéranceautochtones.html>

The Wapikoni Mobile makes it to the 2nd round of the Aviva competition! Many of you voted for us during the first round; it is important to do so for THE NEXT 15 DAYS. Together, we could obtain up to 150 000\$ to fund our stopovers! How you can help : Go to <http://www.aviva-communityfund.org/ideas/acf13653>

1) Register on the Aviva Community Fund website;

2) Sign in;

3) Vote for the project Ateliers Wapikoni mobile : donner une voix aux jeunes Autochtones

Important: vote once a day during 15 days to increase our chances to win! The first round starts October 22nd and continues until November 5th.

TD Scholarships for Community Leadership - Apply today! Applications available at Your high school or CEGEP (in Quebec) Online at [www.td.com/scholarship](http://www.td.com/scholarship) or Call 1-800-308-8306 TTY (Text telephone) 1-800-361-1180

Cultural Manual for Foster and Adoptive parents of Aboriginal Children, launched at the last Gathering of the NETWORK on October 3... CHECK IT OUT!

[www.reseautnlnetwork.com/eng/Portals/5/Cultural%20Manual.pdf](http://www.reseautnlnetwork.com/eng/Portals/5/Cultural%20Manual.pdf)

Starting September 24th, submit your idea for community change.

The Aviva Community Fund is Canada's longest running online community competition. With over \$2.5 million dollars given away to date, the Aviva Community Fund is making a difference in communities across the country. Submit your idea for positive change and have a chance at sharing in this year's \$1 million Aviva Community Fund.

For more info go to <http://www.aviva-communityfund.org/>

Where to get help: bilingual, anonymous, confidential and free phone services, 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Kid's Help Phone Line: 1-800-668-6868 ([www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca))

Youth Helpline: 1-800-263-2266 ([www.teljeunes.com](http://www.teljeunes.com))

Parents' Helpline: 1-800-361-5085 ([www.parenthelpline.ca](http://www.parenthelpline.ca))

Missing Children's Network: They'll help you find kids who have run away or disappeared. 514-843-4333 ([www.enfant-retourquebec.ca](http://www.enfant-retourquebec.ca))

Drug Addiction help and reference: 1-800-265-2626 ([www.drogue-aiderreference.qc.ca](http://www.drogue-aiderreference.qc.ca))

Gambling Addiction help and reference: 1-800-265-2626 ([www.info-reference.qc.ca](http://www.info-reference.qc.ca))

S.O.S. Conjugal Violence: 1-800-363-9010 ([www.sosviolenceconjugale.com](http://www.sosviolenceconjugale.com))

Health and Sexuality Resources Center: 1-888-855-7432 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) ([www.criss.org](http://www.criss.org))

Gay Helpline: 1-888-505-1010 (Monday to Friday, 8 am to 3 am and Saturday-Sunday, 11 am to 3 am)

The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal: 1-866-403-4688 ([www.nwsm.info](http://www.nwsm.info))

Suicide Action Québec: 1-866-277-3553

([www.suicide-quebec.net/](http://www.suicide-quebec.net/))

Residential School Survivors: A 24 hour toll-free crisis line is available to provide immediate emotional assistance and can be reached 24-hours a day, seven days a week: 1-866-925-4419. Other support services and information for survivors is available on the AFN website at: [www.afn.ca/residentialschools/resources](http://www.afn.ca/residentialschools/resources)

### Concordia University, Montreal:

The Centre for Native Education has changed its name to the Aboriginal Student Resource Centre (ASRC). The new name is inclusive of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis students the centre serves and recognizes its role as a resource for the Concordia community. For any further details contact: [aboriginalcentre@concordia.ca](mailto:aboriginalcentre@concordia.ca) or 514-848-2424 ext. 7327.

## The War Amps

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The War Amps does not receive government grants.

## Pssst...

Have any information you'd like to share with *the Nation*? Feel like there's something the rest of the Cree Nation should know? Well that's what *the Nation* is here for. Call us at 514-272-3077 or write us at [news@beesum-communications.com](mailto:news@beesum-communications.com) and we'll look into your story. If you don't contact us, your voice won't be heard!

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## Natural Environment Technology Program Student Profile

### Meet Ernie Rabbitskin, a 2nd year NET student from Chisasibi

**His reason for enrolling:** To be honest, it was because of its location (in Chibougamau). Being close to four Cree communities allows me to pursue my studies while still practicing my culture and be close to family and friends.

**What he likes about it:** In my second semester, I realized that the program was perfect for me. I love the outdoors! It's so important to be aware of the changes and impacts happening with our climate and environment. We are taught about different global studies and environmental laws, ones I never knew existed! I like that we are being taught how to take part in the environmental assessments and/or minimize the impacts in the Cree territory. The support from the college is also great! The counsellors, staff and teachers are eager to see us succeed.

**His favorite course:** All my classes are very interesting and fun. But if I had to pick one, I would say the survival course. We went in the bush for one week and we had to learn both non-native and native ways of survival. I learned a lot and had tons of fun!

**About his family:** I have four children, a grandson and a girlfriend. They are very proud of me and are my source of encouragement! My two step-sons are always interested in my studies. They too are becoming more aware of the environment and are respecting it much more.

**After graduation:** I would love to work for my Cree Nation and participate in the upcoming projects that require an environmental assessment. I can't wait for that day when I can be a part of something big to help preserve our beautiful land.

**His message:** I would encourage anyone who has the interest to enrol! There are many excellent opportunities in this field. We need more Crees to take part in the developments in Eeyou Istchee and this program will help our Nation become stronger. I recommend this program to any Cree who wants to make a difference.

